

The Second Maury Workshop on the History of Oceanography

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LONG-TERM GOALS

Our long term goal was to sustain the dialogue and scholarly work currently underway across the country on the history of the ocean sciences in the United States and the role of ONR in that process. This is an effort, not merely to establish certain facts and preserve sources and artifacts, but rather to explore the dynamics of oceanography's development into a recognized multi-disciplinary science involving personalities and institutions over the years since World War One

OBJECTIVES

We intended to create an initiative that would encourage open discussion on the history of the ocean sciences with an eye toward promoting frequent debate and regular publication on the subject. In addition, we wished to create a forum for those already involved in this field and a vehicle appealing enough both to encourage publication by established professionals and to attract new graduate students.

APPROACH

We employed a workshop format and invited, with the occasional rare exception, only seasoned professionals to achieve a critical mass of talent and expertise in a free and open environment for discussion and reflection. Papers prepared for the workshop were distributed beforehand, read, and introduced by their authors at the workshop. The bulk of the time at Maury 2 was spent in discussion and analysis of the contributions made.

WORK COMPLETED

The workshop exceeded our expectations for on-site productive discussion and insight. Participants went away with ideas for research projects and a comprehensive perspective on the major issues

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currently under examination by their colleagues. Almost every professional currently working in this field was in the room at Maury 2.

We made audio and video recordings of the proceedings for use in training and education as well as to properly archive the experience as the second of its kind, building on the foundation laid by Maury 1.

We collected copies of all papers presented at the workshop and entered into discussions regarding possible publication of the results.

RESULTS

The Maury Workshops have energized the field of ocean science history. The number of professional historians in the field has increased along with a promising influx of graduate students working on both naval and civilian aspects of oceanographic development.

We published a very significant array of articles. The full list appears in the bibliography below. One of the PIs [Weir] had a book accepted for publication by Texas A&M University Press entitled, An Ocean in Common: American Naval Officers, Scientists, and the Ocean Environment, 1919-1961 which benefitted directly from the workshops.

IMPACT/APPLICATION

The history of oceanography field is growing swiftly. We have more historical professionals involved as a result of Maury 1 and 2 and the literature is also growing. With the acceptance of graduate projects for theses and dissertations, the field has received an unprecedented level of recognition. With these attainments comes a deeper understanding of the Navy's critical role both via ONR and other naval agencies in the genesis and growth of oceanography as a field of scientific endeavor.

TRANSITIONS

The productive gathering of interested scholars at the Maury Workshop has identified many interesting and critical areas of research and analysis. The foundations laid by Maury 2 have contributed to at least five other projects in this field, influencing not only subject, but methodology and the scope of sources and collections used..

RELATED PROJECTS

1 - ONR's Oceanography: The Making of a Science seminar series and its oral history component with which many of the Maury participants became involved as oral history interviewers.

2 – Gary Weir's history of SOSUS/IUSS currently underway with ONR support and the blessing of N09BH and N874.

3 - David Van Keuren's ONR supported oral history project with the Russian Oceanographic community.

PUBLICATIONS

Books:

Weir, Gary E. 2001. An Ocean in Common: American Naval Officers, Scientists, and the Ocean Environment. College Station: Texas A&M University Press. (Forthcoming in the Spring of 2001)

Articles:

Allard, Dean C. 2000. Spencer Baird and Support for American Marine Science, 1871-1887, Earth Sciences History, forthcoming.

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Oreskes, Naomi. 2000. Laissez-tomber: Military patronage and women's work in the mid 20th century oceanography. *Historical Studies in the Physical and Biological Sciences* 30, part 2: 373-392.

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Weir, Gary E. 2000. Fashioning Naval Oceanography: Columbus O'Donnell Iselin and American Preparation for War, 1940-1941. Currently under peer review at Isis for the History of Science Society.